

THE STRONG APPEAL OF THE COVENANT: THE CALL TO LOVE AND OBEY THE LORD

DEUTERONOMY 30: 11–16

Introduction

Decisions sometimes confront us that are very difficult to make. We simply do not know what to do. Difficult decisions often involve health or personal difficulty; marital, family or employment problems; or some business, national or world issue. There are events that happen in life that are simply impossible to predict. At other times an event occurs because we have made a wrong decision; we just could not see into the future.

This is not the case with God: the future is known by God, even the details of future events. Because He knows all things — God was able to predict the terrible apostasy of the Israelites referred to in the recent message preached by Moses (see notes, Deut 28:1-68). Now, one of the most interesting and captivating prophecies in all of Scripture is to be made. Speaking through Moses, God predicts the restoration of Israel, a day when the Jews will return to the promised land, modern-day Palestine. Has this prophecy been fulfilled? Was the return of the Jews to Palestine in 1948 a fulfilment of this prophecy? Some Bible commentators say, “Yes!” But if the return of the Jews to Palestine is a fulfilment of this prophecy, then the conditions that are covered by this passage have not yet been met. The Jewish people as a whole community or nation have not yet renewed their commitment to God; they have not yet rededicated their lives to the new covenant established by God. This is the discussion of this important passage of Scripture: *The Strong Appeal and Hope of the Covenant: Restoration — Repentance and Forgiveness*, Deuteronomy 30:1-20.

- I. The conditions of the covenant (vv. 1-2).
- II. The promises of the covenant: restoration — forgiveness and acceptance (vv. 3-10).
- III. The appeal of the covenant: the call to love and obey the LORD (vv. 11-16).
- IV. The final warning against breaking the covenant (vv. 17-18).
- V. The final appeal to accept the covenant (vv. 19-20).

Deuteronomy 30: 11–16 The Appeal of the Covenant: The Call to Love and Obey the LORD

The appeal of the covenant is a strong call, a call to love and obey the LORD. Moses now turned away from prediction and prophecy and focused upon the audience before him. As he faced them, he knew that they desperately needed to rededicate their lives to the LORD. They had a dire need to renew their covenant, their commitment to the LORD. With a strong sense of urgency burning within his heart, he challenged the people to love and obey the LORD:

1. The call to obey God is not unreasonable nor impossible (vv. 11-14). The commandments of God are not in some distant, inaccessible place (vv. 12-13). They are not up in heaven, still unrevealed and hidden in the heart of God. The commandments are not beyond the sea in a foreign land (v. 13). No! The Word of God is near us. It has been revealed by God so that we can obey it (v. 14).

God has demonstrated His love to us in a most wonderful way. He has not left us in the dark, groping, grasping and stumbling about, seeking the answers to life on our own. No! God has revealed His Holy Word to us, telling us how to live life, how to find God, and how to have the assurance of living forever. The Word of God is near, very near, right at our fingertips.

2. All of a sudden, with passion burning in his soul, Moses called upon the people to make a decision (v. 15)...
 - between life and death
 - between good and evil
3. Moses spelled out exactly what he meant by the call of the covenant (v. 16). The call was...
 - to love the LORD
 - to walk in His ways
 - to obey His commandments
4. The decision to love and obey the LORD will result in the most wonderful life. A person will live a full and fruitful life and be wonderfully blessed in the promised land (v. 16).

Thought 1. The call to us is direct and forceful: we must love and obey the LORD. We who live today are without defence, totally without excuse. For God has not only given us the Written Word but also the Living Word. The Written Word is the Holy Bible, the Scriptures that have been written down for us to obey. The Living Word is the Lord Jesus Christ, the greatest witness to the truth that could ever be conceived by the mind of man. Yes, God did a marvellous thing in giving us the Written Word of God. But God did a far more marvellous thing by giving us the Living Word of God. Jesus Christ actually lived out the Written Word of God. He obeyed every commandment in the Holy Scripture, and by obeying, showed us how to obey God. By living upon this earth, Jesus Christ showed us how to live life. But not only this: being the Perfect Man — obeying all of the commandments of God and being sinless — He became the Ideal Man. As the Ideal Man, He was able to bear all our sins and pay the penalty of our condemnation. He was able to take the judgment that was due us — take it and bear it for us.

As the Living Word of God, Jesus Christ is a far greater gift from God than even the Written Word of God. Because of living in this day and time, we are of all people without excuse. If a people were ever confronted with a decision that desperately

needed to be made, it is we who live today. We must make the decision to love and obey the LORD.

John 14:15-16 *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever — the Spirit of truth.*

John 14:23 *Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”*

John 16:27 *“No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.”*

Eph 6:24 *Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.*

2 Th 3:5 *May the Lord direct your hearts into God’s love and Christ’s perseverance.*

1 Pet 1:8 *Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.*

Jude 1:21 *Keep yourselves in God’s love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.*

Deut 6:5 *Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*

Deut 10:12 *And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*

Psa 31:23 *Love the LORD, all his saints! The LORD preserves the faithful, but the proud he pays back in full. ■*